REMARKS

The applicant respectfully requests reconsideration in view of the following remarks. Support for newly added claim 9 can be found in the original claim 8. Support for newly added claims 10 and 11 can be found in the original claims 4 and 5.

The Examiner has required restriction between the following groups:

I.   Claims 2-7, drawn to a tubular artificial sausage casing, classified in claims 138, subclass 118.1; or

II.   Claim 8, drawn to a stuffed sausage casing, classified in class 426, subclass 105.

Applicants respectfully elect Group I claims 2-7 with traverse. The applicant believes that claims 1-7 and 9-11 read on the elected group. Applicant traverses the restriction requirement because the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office have not carried forward its burden of proof to establish distinctness.

In particular, MPEP § 803 states:

> If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.

The Commissioner may require restriction if two or more independent and distinct inventions are claimed in a single application (37 CFR 1.142(a)). In the present case, although the claimed subject matter may be classified in different classes, the inventions are not independent.

It is respectfully requested that the restriction requirement be withdrawn, and that each of claims 1-11 presently pending in this application be examined.

A three month extension fee has been paid. Applicant believes no additional fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 03-2775, under Order No. 15551-00001-US from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

Dated: January 15, 2008   Respectfully submitted,

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